



2014 Vidya Gaem Awards
Award Speeches

Most Hated Award - WINNER: Dragon Age: Inquisition

Has any other game ever created such hate and vitriol before it even had a release date? Three years after Dragon Age 2 won our Most Hated Award in 2011, Bioware has taken one step forward and two steps back. At this point, it's Bioware's company motto. Dragon Age: Inquisition took an attempt at improving the series and ended up with a mishmashed pile of broken hopes. With poorly written characters such as Sera, or Cole Steel, and as well as dialogue so terrible it became a way to parody the game itself, Bioware's hard work resulted in everyone laughing at the idea of "riding the Bull".

For what it's worth, the gameplay did improve over the second game a bit, and the open worlds weren't terrible, or copied and pasted like Dragon Age 2's outdoor areas, but that was not enough to highlight the few positives in this game. Model clipping was still abundant, sound would inexplicably disappear only to come rushing back, like a schizophrenic genderqueer orchestra, and the game was riddled with back-breaking glitches that caused you to restart your entire save. This game was a perfect example of the level of quality companies are willing to put out in 2014, when investors' pockets are more important than the actual consumer. Great job, Bioware. You've truly become artisans of your craft.

Least Worst Award - WINNER: Bayonetta 2

A shining beacon in a year when most games were either incomplete on arrival, barebones, or god forbid, developed by Ubisoft, Bayonetta 2 fell into our ungrateful laps. We don't deserve a game as good as Bayonetta 2, especially after the general public managed to avoid both Clover and Platinum studios' earlier masterpieces. The gameplay is just as solid, if not, more so, than the first game. The dialogue is just as witty and fun as before, powers and enemies are creative, and the art design manages to salvage the Wii U's shortcomings hardware wise. There's not a lot to complain about when it comes to Bayonetta 2, and it won Least Worst for a reason. All we can say is to go out and give it a shot. Congratulations, Platinum. You've won our hearts. Again.

Press X To Win The Award - WINNER: Sonic Boom

How does Sega go about revitalizing the rotting corpse of the Sonic franchise? By making a game, an unapologetic cartoon cash-in that ignores everything that makes Sonic great. Take the worst parts of Sonic Adventure and sprinkle in game breaking "features" and you've got Sonic Boom! Long gone are the days of speeding through levels filled with traps, collecting rings like a madman. Sonic Boom believes that for some reason the player just wants to wander around some third rate Jak and Daxter world sparsely populated with robots whose AI consists of standing around and well, more standing.

Sonic Boom wasn't just a clear-cut example of name-only recognition, it was by far one of those rare moments in video games where nearly every aspect of the gameplay - the most fundamental of all vidya's building blocks by the way - couldn't even stand on its own two feet. With a host of game bugs, glitches, broken mechanics and areas that were just outright effortless in their execution, it was a direct punch in the balls to not just die-hard Sonic fans, but also those who vouched for Sega's occult franchise to possibly get back on track. Well if we're speaking in context, Sonic Boom isn't just off the track, it's falling right through it - Sonic Boom, without question, is easily 2014's winner for worst gameplay. May God have mercy on your soul Sonic, for Sega shall not.

"Actually Kind of Fun" Award - WINNER: Bayonetta 2

Not that the 2009 original was anything but sublime, but to improve the experience of one of 2014's most eagerly-awaited sequels in the way Bayonetta 2 managed, is worth an award in itself. Witch time makes its glorious return and it's better than ever, helping our titular witch dispatch both angelic and demonic foes with so much style, even Dante can't help but feel emasculated. The addition of the Umbran Climax adds a beautiful wrinkle to a flawless face, bringing the already fascinatingly entertaining flurry of combat and combo-building into the next generation. If that wasn't enough, the homage to AfterBurner in the final level will have your palms sweaty, dick throbbing, and a smile frozen upon your face.

"Not Important" Award - WINNER: Sera (Dragon Age: Inquisition)

Was Sera written as a joke character or a piece of social commentary on the audience that Bioware now caters to? Her dialogue breaks any immersion, as if a present day drunk slag was sent into the land of Dragon Age. She looks like she smells like truck-stop floor, and that might be an understatement.

It all started with her introduction. Seemingly created by Bioware and EA's LBGT board of directors, she's the quirky elf with a cockney accent and an attitude that reflected the worst of the LOL SO RANDUM community of the internet. Who can forget her character card ? Then again, that's exactly who this character was created for. Are you a 13 year old girl who can't wait to watch The Hobbit movies with your new bi-curious girlfriend? Then Sera is the perfect companion for you.

Silent Protagonist Award - WINNER: Snake (Metal Gear Rising: Ground Zeroes)

We're not sure just how much we need to explain this. He's gorgeous, he's virile. He's gorgeous. You remember that little backstory video? In Metal Gear Solid 1? He sits there, nude. It's like he taught me how to be nude. All of us. Without ideology. Without cause. Without nation. Without David Hayter.

Deja Vu Award - WINNER: Assassin's Creed Unity

Let me tell y'all a bit about dat dere Uh Sassins Creed. It used to come 'round bout once a year, causing up a stink and riling up all those damn city boys. Well, this year weren't no different and just like the cock cries in the mornin', we got an Uh Sassins Creed game. This one with frenchies tryan to change history while wearing frilly shirts. If my re-collect-sheeon serves me right, that's 12 games in 7 years.

Now where I'm from we call that "Milken the cow" and son, this cow is milked dry. Old man You-bee-sawft left those udders raw, bloody, and poorly optimized. But the old man wutn't done just yet, he got himself a second cow named Rouge... uh... err... Rogue. Last I heard he had to put ol' "Rogue" down. Poor thing was damn near skin and bone after You-bee-sawft was done with it.

Yep, we're sure that old man Ubi's done lost his mind at this point.

Not Another Rehash Award - WINNER: Bayonetta 2

Who says we can't have more of the same? If this were a Charles Dickens tale, we'd have already crushed poor Oliver Twist's decrepit little body in stampeding cries of 'MORE' from Platinum for some stupid sexy witch time. Who am I to stop you though? Bayonetta 2 is what everyone hopes they will get when a sequel is announced. Trim the fat off the old iteration and add enough gameplay improvements that make it feel comfortable, yet new, all at the same time.

Just like that Dragon Dildo you keep hidden under your Bayonetta body pillow, you sick fuck.

Pixels Are Art 2 - WINNER: Broken Age

You can measure a game's pretentiousness by how many characters sport the rosy colored nose made popular by Penny Arcade comics and 4chan's sister website, Tumblr. The gaming equivalent of a horn rimmed, type-writer punching, scarf wielding, latte drinking hipster who sexually identifies as a cross gendered redwood tree, Broken Age took pretentiousness to new heights. Its art style is one that tries to convey serious emotional depth without being constricted by realism. Unfortunately, it removes the effect Double Fine attempted to get across with its so called story. Broken Age shouldn't even be considered a game as each scene is barely held together by such weak gameplay elements, it's hard to believe it cost more than 3 million dollars to develop. Broken Age's narrative tries so hard to break from the norm that it's hard to take seriously. Mixing themes of racism, independence, and predetermined destinies don't mix well when you've got Jack Black shitting golden eggs as a way to advance your story.

New Challenger Award - WINNER: Shovel Knight

Yacht Club games managed to capture lightning in a bottle with the release of Shovel Knight. When so many developers fail to emulate the style and substance that made those NES classics so great, Shovel Knight feels and looks like it was ripped straight out of the 90's. From the start menu to the ending credits, Shovel Knight dazzles with a graphics style that matches the best from a bygone era and controls that would make Miyamoto blush.

Shovel Knight has it all. Prophetic goatmen, dancing fish royalty, platforming that demands a deft touch and boss fights that will have you wanting to snap your 3DS in half. Shovel Knight was an absolute breath of fresh air into the decrepit lungs of the 2D platforming genre. Whatever you do Yacht Club Games, don't disappoint us when you release the inevitable sequel. For now, rejoice as the masses have chosen Shovel Knight as the winner for best new IP.

**Citizen Kane of Gaming Award - WINNER: Dragon Age:
Inquisition**

Within minutes of playing Dragon Age: Inquisition, you'll hear one of the greatest lines known to man, blurted out by a dwarf who looks like a guido stuck in Middle Earth: "...and here I thought we would be ass-deep in demons". Varric, you are one edgy cunt.

It's as if one of the /v/GA writers wrote this dialogue! It only gets worse from here. Bioware seems adamant to make every conversation read like two teenagers whose hormones are out of control, with dicks and pussies raging on about rifts and demons. And when you're not trying to seduce one of your companions with dialogue straight from the walls of a bathroom stall, you'll attempt to make your way through stiff conversations with answers so generic, you'll feel like your character has no impact on how the story progress whatsoever. And the story, the most generic fantasy story this side of Tolkien fan-fiction. Main character with no recollection of how they got there? Check. A great evil has spread darkness across the land? Check. Witches giving birth to demon babies? Check and check. Thanks again Bioware for showing us that if you can maintain a Tumblr page dedicated to shipping your favorite dungeons and dragons characters, you too can become a writer for a PROFESSIONAL VIDEO GAME COMPANY.

Journal Update Award - WINNER: South Park: The Stick of Truth

Written by Matt and Trey themselves, South Park: The Stick of Truth was probably one of the best transitions from televised series to video game we've seen yet. There's been a small handful of South Park games in the past that the duo just passed off to the developers, and the quality showed. This time, however, things were different. Working hands on with the developers, Matt Stone and Trey Parker wrote the script to probably the most crass and hilarious game this year. Stick of Truth went directions many developers are afraid to take, and the result paid off.

Beta's Alpha Award - WINNER: Broken Age

3.3 million-fucking-dollars. And that was just the first half of a game that is basically a pop-up book voiced by frodo. Only way you're getting that second half is if you BUY THE EARLY ACCESS GAME.

So let's recap what happened: Tim Schaefer suckerd a bunch of nostalgic buffoons into funding his "Grand Idea", only to be fed lies and disappointment. Unable to meet the release date and features originally promised, Double Fine went out and released what most would consider a proof of concept, let alone an actual game. Broken Age is the definition of overpromising and under delivering and honestly, that's an understatement. Next time you think about backing a Kickstarter or purchasing an Early Access game, remember that night when Ol' Timmy fucked you in the ass and didn't have the courtesy to give you a reach around.

Jet Set Award - WINNER: Super Smash Bros. for 3DS/Wii U

Do you really need a reason to tell you why something sounds good?

Plot and Backstory Award - WINNER: Bayonetta 2

Bayonetta, Bayonetta, Bayonetta, she's got the looks, the curves, and the moves to kill. Bayonetta is, easily one of the biggest examples on how a female protagonist can go toe to toe with any male protagonist on terms of badassery and personality. Bayonetta 2 adds much more to Bayonetta's personality by making her go on a journey not to fulfill her own objectives but to save a friend in need. Bayonetta wins this not only because of her power and charisma, but also by showing how her character went full circle and showing genuine character growth when compared to the first game, going from an amnesiac lone wolf only concerned on finding her old memories and revenge towards the lumen sages to a character that actively cares for her new allies and companions, fighting literal hell for the sake of them. Also, she was designed by a woman, and that matters to some people.

IP Twist Award - WINNER: South Park: The Stick of Truth

Be honest, when you heard there was a South Park game in development, did you, or anyone you know, figure it would be a turn-based RPG? Despite the skepticism, Stick of Truth resulted in the best Paper Mario we've had in the past ten years. With entertaining dialogue, hands-on combat, and a plethora of disgusting jokes, South park: The Stick of Truth ended up being a pretty damn solid game. Sorry you guys didn't get the whole game, Europe. Even more sorry about you, Australia.

Seal of Quality Award - WINNER: Assassin's Creed Unity

It takes a special kind of atrocity to make the front page of Cracked Magazine where the kind of journalist who would usually benefit from being 'special friends' with Ubisoft instead opts to write seven 500 word reasons as to why your game is 'fucking unplayable'. Once you got past the idea that a game series about the distinct and nuanced societal differences of different historical periods essentially redressed its previous settings in pretty colors in order to charge you another 60 dollars, you had to deal with a release that wouldn't pass mark on an RPGmaker General. Just remember, there is an entire corner of the teen market that will defend this. For editorial purposes we've been asked to include some of what THIS is. Texture popping like the world itself is growing a scab, collision detection that wouldn't make broadcast in televised wrestling and production design entirely based on a Post-It saying "France is fucking cool when it looks kind of old."

Niche Award - WINNER: Shantae and the Pirate's Curse

There are plenty of reasons why *Shantae and the Pirate's Curse* won the Niche Award. It has all the makings of a good 2D Metroidvania platformer; clever puzzle design, progressive empowerment through new abilities, and an emphasis on exploration. It's the sharp sense of humor and vivacious world, though, that ultimately propel *Pirate's Curse* to greatness and help it stand out from the glut of retro-inspired platformers. Sadly, none of us played this fucking game. The reasons I just gave were straight out of an review from IGN, and the director is using clips straight from Let's Play videos on YouTube to make this award segment. So there you have it. *Shantae and the Pirate's Curse* wins the Niche Award, for the best game none of us played.

Eye Candy Award - WINNER: Metal Gear Solid: Ground Zeroes

We wonder at what point exactly it became obvious that an entire floor of texture artists and level designers were going to need to make an island smaller than Central Park look like the gold standard of gameplay environments. None the less, come rain or shine or dust effect, the level of detail and polish embedded into Ground Zeroes starts and ends with impressive graphical displays. Kaz and Snake may be more gorgeous than ever but it's the various weather effects, well researched location and sneak peaks at pastures new that reassure us that The Phantom Pain won't look like a pile of crap.

Shareholder's Award - WINNER: Ubisoft

I remember a time when all that was expected from Ubisoft were bland games that were pretty well executed. Far Cry 3, several Splinter Cells, early Assassin Creeds, etc. But at some point, the committee that was in charge of not sucking completely and was swapped by people that just didn't know how game production works, and went for a Hollywood approach on how to handle game releases. Yearly rehashes (at times, double rehashes), cobbled together online experiences to cash on their sub-par online stores, and when they fucked up royally by making their game release so broken people had their refunds in masses, they tried to just shut them up by giving the free games with the small print saying they wouldn't be able to sue them if they accepted that. Which is why this court finds Ubisoft guilty of Crimes Against Gaming.

Hyperbole Award - WINNER: Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain

Another decent piece of direction in Hideo Kojima's portfolio. The trailer manages to acutely balance cherry picked emotional hype and a bleed of information that reveals just enough about the gameplay and plot. Answering the questions of the nature of the threat to Snake and crew whilst putting a much larger display of scale that satisfied critics of Ground Zeroes. We live in hyperbolic hope that the games can replicate this consistent quality. Well done Kojima-san.